

#42

INDIAN ROCK SHELTERS

Madison, CT

The Indian Rock Shelters trail offers an unusual visit to the natural rock shelter home sites of early Native Americans. This 1.2 mile trail is a loop that can be walked in a counter-clockwise direction with rocky spots and wet areas. A rock ledge that parallels the trail is on the far side of a low, wet area. The forest is quite diverse in this area with a variety of native deciduous trees.

The trail passes over broken rocks of ancient granite just to the right of a large rock outcrop. Note the imbedded vein of white quartz. Eventually, the trail passes just to the left of and along a stone wall—the western boundary of the Regional Water Authority's Lake Hammonasset property. It then follows a hogback ridge and crosses a stream. The trail doubles sharply back along the stream and close by the rock faces seen

earlier. Soon it passes the first of the rock shelters, crosses a stream, and enters a valley. Small waterfalls often occur in this area and in the winter creates a beautiful cascade of ice falls and icicles. The forest floor is densely covered with ferns, while fallen tree trunks and rocks are blanketed by mosses. The trail is quite rough in this section as it passes over and around rocks that have fallen from the ledge faces.

Trees grow in the cliff face in this area with roots that split off new rocks. The lowlands host several vernal pools. Further along is another rock shelter and then the trail crosses the beginning of the Neck River. Here the trail leads to a spur to an overlook of Bartlett Pond (now called Sunset Lake) which is a lovely place to rest and enjoy the view. Follow the spur back to the main trail, cross the Neck River again, and continue back to the trailhead.

Photo by the Madison Land Conservation Trust



Rock shelters provided a winter home for Indian families. Locally, the Hammonasset tribe of this area would annually migrate to spend summers farming along the shore and then travel northward along the River to these shelters and other types of higher ground in the winter for hunting and fishing. The location of these shelters is ideal as it faces away from winter storms and is close by a good source of water.

Directions and Parking:

From the North Madison traffic circle, go east on Old Toll Road (Route 80) to Summer Hill Road. Follow Summer Hill Road north to Twilight Drive to Lake Drive. Follow Lake Drive to the end. Parking is located at the end of the cul-de-sac near the trailhead.

Permitted Activities:

The trails areas in the MLCT properties are for hiking only. Dogs are allowed, but must be leashed. Please pick up all animal waste.

This project made possible through a grant from the National Recreational Trails Program, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection.



The descriptive information for this trail is excerpted from the MLCT's Madison Trails Guide.

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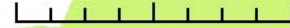
For more information about this location, contact:

Madison Land Conservation Trust
www.madisonlandtrust.org

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0 0.04 0.08 0.16 Miles



Parking



Town Boundary



Open Space - All Types



Water Bodies



Wetlands



Trails



Rivers and Streams



Interstate or Parkway



Local Route



Streets

TO
ROUTE 80